

The New Zealand Radio Record

(Incorporating the "Canterbury Radio Journal.")

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N.Z. RADIO PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
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WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, 1930.

NOISE, AND ITS RELATION TO RADIO BROADCASTING.

AT its last meeting, the Wellington City Council decided that notices should be served upon gramophone and radio dealers requesting them to refrain from operating their instruments in the street doorways of their premises. This is a step to reduce the noise level of the city, but it is likely to cause a great deal of controversy, for several dealers claim that by this means they secure a large proportion of their business, even as much as 25 per cent. in the case of one trader. The motive of the Council is in accordance with the lines of thought now being given publicity in America and Europe. No less authority than Thomas A. Edison has predicted that sooner or later increasingly noisy cities will end by deafening all of their citizens permanently. Psychological analysis carried out in several American universities has proved this to be the case. The results of these experiments indicate that unless the noise level can be reduced the vitality of the city population must materially suffer. The agitation for quieter cities has gathered momentum, and in London, New York, Chicago, Berlin, Budapest, and many other of the world's largest cities, officials or commissions are seeking to reduce the noise level.

One of the first moves of a New York commission was a thorough analysis of the noises in certain areas, and this showed that radio loudspeakers were responsible for much of the controllable noise. Prior to this thousands of violent letters of protest were received by the New York City newspapers, health officers, and noise experts against the needless nuisance of the radio loudspeaker playing in the street or audible outside the owner's home. Responding to this universal complaint American newspapers have been agitating for reasonable regulations to govern the operation of radio apparatus. We can, in view of the course adopted by the larger cities, understand the action of the City Council.

Yet there is another aspect. Does the playing of the modern radio or radio and gramophone combination constitute a noise? A short while ago there could be no doubt that the only justification for the loudspeaker outside the dealer's shop was the novelty of receiving broadcast programmes. But the instrument of to-day is of no mean calibre, and its playing in the doorways of musical houses is, in most New Zealand cities and towns, welcomed by the public. What is wanted is regulation in the volume of sound, and

this is difficult. Very loud music clashes with other street sounds and causes noise which is distasteful, with the result that the radio instrument is termed "noisy and undesirable." If the dealer would bear this point in mind, and not endeavour to out-class in volume his competitor, the steps taken by the Wellington City Council would not be necessary.

But the problem goes beyond the cities. With the increasing power made available by the operation of power packs and the greater volume obtainable through the use of the new valves, there is a temptation for the set-owner to operate his set at maximum volume, and if this is too much for the room to place the speaker outside to "entertain" the neighbourhood. This is all very well up to a point, but one must remember that however firmly he is convinced that his apparatus is perfect, others may not think the same, and his action may be displeasing. Very few home receivers can handle enough volume without distortion to entertain the neighbourhood. The result is that distorted signals thrust upon unwilling listeners do a considerable amount of harm both to the owner and, more important, to radio. During daylight hours the trouble is not so serious, but in the stiller hours of the night the sounds travel farther and create more disturbance.

Even within the home volume should be regulated so that to the unaccustomed it is not overbearing. Referring back to the results of the American universities, we find that the continual operation of the radio set at volume above that of comfortable audibility is a devitalising factor that must, in the long run, make itself felt in the nervous constitution of the race.

The Old Year Passes Sir Joseph Ward

World-wide Broadcasts Broadcasts New Year Message

SITUATED as New Zealand is, near the 180th meridian, the YA stations were the first stations in the world to greet the New Year. All four stations broadcast the popular celebrations which always accompany the passing of the old year and the advent of the new.

From New Zealand the listeners-in could pass to Australia, where, two hours later, the Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne broadcasting stations told how the old year died. After them came Adelaide and Perth. And so on round the world. As the hour between 1929 and 1930 came and went some station on British or foreign soil was announcing the fact and describing how the event was being celebrated.

On the evening of our New Year's Day New Zealand listeners-in on short waves were able to follow the American celebrations in city after city right across the vast continent. The U.S.A. broadcasting stations had been linked for the purpose so that listeners in the Central and Western States could also hear the rejoicings in the Eastern States, and vice versa. As the midnight hour travelled westward the principal towns took up the broadcasting, which was relayed to all the other stations. All this could be heard on short-wave sets in New Zealand in the early evening of January 1.

The final of the American celebrations was a visit to Chinatown, in San Francisco, where the Chinese, who have now adopted the Western calendar, welcomed in the New Year with splendid enthusiasm. Their weird orchestral music came through well.

THE many thousands of people throughout New Zealand who listened-in to 2YA and 3YA on Thursday, January 2, realised what a personal and intimate thing the broadcasting service is. They were transported to the home of Sir Joseph Ward at Heretaunga, Wellington, and heard New Zealand's Prime Minister speaking just as they would have done had they been in the room with him.

For months past Sir Joseph Ward has been recovering from a severe illness and has been living in more or less seclusion from the public. His callers have been limited in number and they have considered themselves privileged to have had the opportunity of conversing with him. But by the wonder of wireless the great body of ordinary people were able on Thursday evening last week to be in what seemed personal touch with Sir Joseph. A microphone had been installed in the Prime Minister's home and Sir Joseph carried on what seemed to every listener-in to be a personal conversation.

Broadcasting is the greatest breaker-down of barriers that there can be. Everyone who heard Sir Joseph Ward now feels like a personal caller who has inquired as to the health of the Prime Minister, been admitted to his room as a special favour and heard him speak, sympathised with him in his illness, and wished him a quick return to his normal health.

Have you obtained your copy of the

"N.Z. Radio Listener's Guide"?

Dealers and booksellers 2/6; Post Free 2/9—P.O. Box 1032, Wellington. Available everywhere.

Use Our Booking Offices in Advance **HUBBY TOOK THE SYDAL SAMPLE.**

S-O-S

TRAVEL IN COMFORT BY CAR

**WELLINGTON — PALMERSTON
NEW PLYMOUTH**

"Please send me a jar of Sydal. You sent me a sample by request a few weeks ago and my husband is so delighted with it for shaving that he will not be without it now. Please send a sample to my sister in Christchurch, as I am sure she would be as pleased with it as we are."

WANTED AND FOR SALE.

for column of casual advertisements see page 32.